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IWP Receives Continued Funding

The review is in! IWP will receive \$45,000 from the National Writing Project for the 2007-08 year. Many thanks go out to our amazing leadership on the core council and to all who participated in another amazing year of providing high quality professional development opportunities to teachers across Indiana.

In celebration, I thought fellow teacher consultants would like to read some of the comments in the review of our Continued Funding Application (CFA). Annemarie Oldfield, Director of the High Plains Writing Project, wrote the review—excerpts follow:

<p>“The first thing that struck me upon reading your narrative is how well you know your service area and how involved IWP is with Indiana’s Department of Education. It seems to me that your working relationship with the state not only informs your plans for sound professional development but also informs the DOE of sound assessment techniques for Indiana standards and teacher assessments in the teaching of writing.”</p>	<p>“I was encouraged to read you are addressing the high-stakes testing dilemma faced by classroom teachers by helping them ‘develop a separate writing-on-demand unit that identifies writing-to-a-prompt as a distinct genre.’ To ignore demands placed on classroom teachers that do not subscribe to NWP models about the teaching of writing is to ensure continued confusion for teachers and resistance from school districts to integrating sound practices we espouse.”</p>
<p>“Your Comp Camp serves many purposes and indicates many successes. Youth programs are another area some sites have difficulties creating and sustaining. Might you consider inviting TCs or teams of TCs from other sites to come to IWP to participate in your summer Comp Camps as a way of modeling possibilities for their sites? As you may have guessed, I have a team in mind to send.”</p>	<p>“I enjoyed reading of your long-term visions for effecting educational changes in the teaching of writing in Indiana. Too often professional development is reactive to state mandates rather than proactive in state planning. I congratulate you on the strategy and planning it takes to have such vision.”</p>
<p>“Reading your CFA was both a celebration of your successes and an inspiration of new, valuable information to take home to my own site. Thank you for taking the time to share so creatively with other sites the struggles, successes, and original ideas of the IWP.”</p>	

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Bea Sousa is honored with Vivian Conley Award

This past fall on August 25, 2006, IWP's Bea Sousa was presented with a certificate for the Vivian Conley Award for Education at a ceremony at Muncie City Hall. The award honors the memory of Vivian Conley, who began taking courses at Ball State at the age of 60. She earned a bachelor's degree in political science and a master's degree in gerontology. During her time at the university, she founded the Non-Traditional Student Association and was a tireless advocate for her fellow students. Conley's promotion of higher education is credited with bringing 185 students to Ball State. The Coalition of Women's Organizations of Delaware County gave Bea this award on the date that women earned the right to vote in 1920. The following speech was written by Linda Hanson, IWP Site Director, to be read about Bea at the presentation ceremony:

Bea Sousa's passion for writing is contagious, inspiring, and of long duration. In her work with her own middle school students in Noblesville, she created curious, enthusiastic writers who produced amazing work for her. After participating in the Indiana Writing Project Invitational Summer Institute in 1997, she began sharing her increasing expertise with colleagues beyond her own teaching team. When she left her classroom six years ago, she expanded exponentially the number of students who would benefit from her knowledge about—and passion for—teaching writing. She became the Inservice Coordinator for the Indiana Writing Project located at Ball State University.

The Writing Project is built on a very simple idea: teachers teaching teachers is the best model for professional growth. That idea has changed the nature of writing instruction in this country. Bea has contributed significantly to the transformation in Indiana. She has worked predominantly with teachers at schools in East Central Indiana, but early work carried her as far as Jeffersonville, and more recently north to Fort Wayne. Her first solo task was a three-year partnership between the Indiana Writing Project and Indianapolis Public Schools involving teachers from 14 middle and high schools.

As IWP's primary Teacher Consultant for school-based professional development, Bea has created highly successful programs that rely on the same principles proven effective in teaching writing: choice, time, modeling, and mentoring. She immerses teachers in their own writing, inquiry, and reflection so they can carry their experiential knowledge of writing back into their classrooms. Teachers respond with overwhelmingly positive evaluations and comments. They note that *"Bea has been in the classroom and you can tell she knows what our classes really do!"* Some are aware that *"Ms. Sousa's ideas really reflect recent research findings"*; others thank her for helping them *"understand the reasons for writing"* and for reminding them *"of the importance of writing in the learning process."*

Of Bea's methods, they note, *"Bea takes a difficult skill to teach and presents it in a way that is easy to understand and has direct application to the classroom."* They *"Love the hands-on approach, conversation and group work, . . . time to process, plan, and share."* They also value her modeling: *"I never understood how to teach writing craft until I began attending these workshops."* *"Watching you interact with the students . . . helps me to re-think how I do various activities and lessons."* Teachers reveal the impact Bea has had, claiming *"I'm a much better writer now!"* *"I feel that I've acquired some very valuable tools to aid my students in tackling the complex demands of writing."* *"I can hardly wait to try these new ideas in the classroom."* *"I plan to take it slow, but to implement the workshop approach immediately."* And finally, *"I can't wait to teach writing tomorrow!"* Implicit in many of these comments is a growing respect for students' capabilities, the same respect that underlies Bea's approach to working with teachers. One teacher records her own transformation: *"I've changed my thinking and approach to teaching writing. I feel I have more respect for my students' creativity."*

The broader impact of such transformations lies in improved student writing, measured in Indiana by ISTEP+ scores. Two stories will suffice. Bea worked with teachers in **Arlington Elementary** for two years to decrease the number of students scoring 3's and increase the number scoring 4's on the ISTEP Writing Development. From 2003 to 2005, the number of 3rd graders scoring 3 decreased from 40 to 28, the number scoring 4 remained constant, and the number scoring 5 or 6 increased from 8 to 22, surpassing the teachers' goals. The same students moving to 4th grade showed similar patterns of improvement. At **Mays Elementary**, after two years of work with a self-selected Writing Cadre, Bea piloted with a 3rd and a 6th grade teacher the Writing on Demand unit developed by one of the IWP Advanced Institutes. Mays scores were always above the ISTEP state average in all areas except writing, so the results of the 2004 pre-ISTEP writing cycle were quite remarkable: 91% of the 3rd graders scored 4,5, or 6 in writing development, significantly exceeding the state average. The 6th graders, too, scored significantly higher than the state average, increasing the percentage of students scoring 4, 5, or 6 from 36% in 2003 to 68% in 2004 and 81% in 2005.


While the Writing Project encourages teachers' growth and development of leadership abilities, Bea Sousa emerges as a live model to emulate. She is a master teacher with an indomitable spirit, well deserving of the Women's Equality Day Vivian Conley Award for Education.

Comp Camp 2006—Year in Review

IWP's Comp Camps have evolved quite a bit over the past year. Joyce Jamerson, Youth Writing Camp Coordinator and TC from SI 2000, is pleased to announce that we now have IWP sponsored comp camps occurring throughout the entire year. Saturday Camps began in the Spring of 2006 and continued in the Fall of 2006 and Spring of 2007. After her spectacular Saturday Seminar on how to run a Comp Camp in January 2007, Joyce also knows of several prospective satellite camps that will be beginning this summer at various schools around the area (also with the support of IWP Teacher Consultants). Joyce would like to encourage more TCs to get involved with Comp Camps as IWP will be offering camps for middle and high school students this summer as well. Please email iwp@bsu.edu for more information about how to get involved or start a satellite camp of your own!



Top 12 Reasons to Attend Comp Camp (Compiled by Attendees)



You get to share your writing with others!

You get to show your writing style!

It's fun!

Awesome teachers!

You get to meet new friends!

You get to have a celebration at the end!

You can write about the things you like to write about!

The snacks are good!

You get to write a lot!

You get to work with Ball State students!

You get to use the computers and print out what you write!

You learn a lot about writing in Writer's Toolbox!

Student Writing

Submitted by Tammy Taylor, IWP TC from SI 1999

Written by Kiersten Thomas

The Digestive System: A Berry's Point of View

Hello, my fellow Americans, I'm Halle Berry and I am ready to tell you about my journey through digestive system. It goes a little like this...

There I was in the middle of my big scene when all of a sudden something was a hold of me. I'm trying to get away but the hand is just too strong!

"Noooo! Please not the mouth!" I screamed. I was starting to get aggravated. "Put me down you beast. Don't you know who I am? Ouch, oh, ah. You apparently don't!"

The teeth were already smashing against me. It was as if those evil things were snickering at ME of all berries. Okay, now that the chomping is over, I am going towards the esophagus. Huh, that esophagus looks a lot like a slide. This might be fun.

"Weeee!"

Wow that was so much fun. Did you know that the esophagus is a tube that carries food to the stomach? I'm in the stomach now. And lets just say it's no spa in here. It's all squishy and the more food that comes the more the stomach expands. Ewww, there's fluid in here, and it's mixing with me! This is soooo gross! This is NOT what I call star treatment. I don't deserve to be treated like this. I mean come on I am Halle Berry after all. (Aren't I?)

Ouch! I think I can do without the squeezing, thank you. Well, I'm in the small intestine now. There are chemicals from the liver and pancreas coming to the small intestine to help digest the food. I'm looking around and it looks like this guy really likes French fries. There must be a million of them in here! Oh wait, those French fries are actually thing called villi. My bad! The job of the villi is to give the small intestine more surface area to absorb food.

Hold on a minute, I'm almost in the large intestine...Okay, I'm there now. It's very similar to the small intestine, except bigger. Did you know that most of the large intestine is known as the colon? Helpful bacteria live in the colon you know. Helpful bacteria keeps out the hurtful bacteria that cause diseases. Ahhh...ahhh...choooo! Sorry about that, I'm allergic to bacteria!

Well, this has been my story about traveling through the digestive system. And don't forget to read my next story: [My Journey Through the Urinary System](#).

For the other berries at home who are reading this...be careful the humans are everywhere! This is Halle Berry. Love ya berries! See ya!

Young Adult Book Review

Uglies

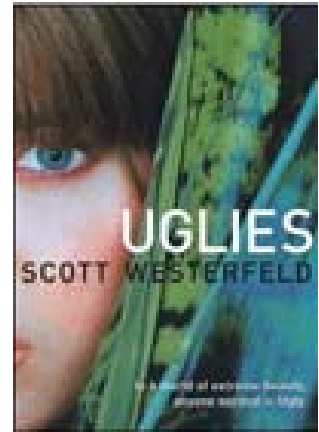
By Scott Westerfeld

Scholastic, ©2005

Every kid longs for the day he or she will turn sixteen...and so does fifteen-year-old Tally Youngblood. But not for the reasons you might think. In her high-tech world where anything your heart desires is given to you just by asking, the only thing Tally longs for is being pretty. All young children are born ugly in the city: imperfect features, blemishes, and strict surveillance to keep them out of New Pretty Town across the river. On their sixteenth birthday they are taken to the hospital where the “operation” is performed to turn them pretty. They move to New Pretty Town and live a life of partying and glamour without a care in the world.

Tally and her friend Shay share the same birthday and will have their operations very soon. Strangely though, Shay seems to not care about turning pretty. She spends time dreaming about the world outside of the city and talking about a mysterious boy named David. Tally doesn't know what to make of this and when Shay decides to runaway and stay ugly, forces beyond Tally's control will force her to make a choice between her friendship with Shay and becoming pretty.

Uglies is the first novel in a trilogy about Tally Youngblood and her “bubbly” adventures. At times exhilarating and at other times serious and sinister, Westerfeld will take you on a nonstop adventure comparable to Lois Lowry's *The Giver*. After reading this novel, young adults will contemplate the true value of friendship and the price of vanity.



Professional Book Reviews for Busy Educators

Writing On Demand: Best Practices and Strategies for Success

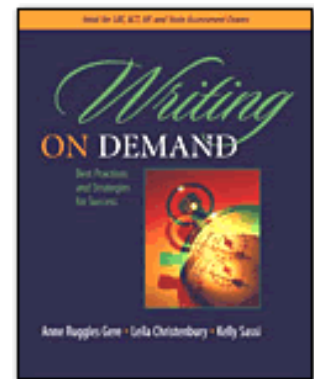
By Anne Ruggles Gere, Leila Christenbury, and Kelly Sassi

Heinemann Publishers 2005

Reviewed by Jenny Smithson

I first heard of *Writing on Demand* when the book title inspired the theme for the ITW Conference in the fall of 2006. I admit I was skeptical about a conference with a theme centered around something I hate to do and teach so much, but I reserved judgment until I heard Anne Ruggles Gere speak at the opening session. After hearing what she had to say about writing on demand, I immediately bought her book.

Writing on Demand is guided by five basic assumptions: 1) good writing and writing on demand are not contradictory, 2) Assessment is an integral part of effective writing construction, 3) writing prompts can be approached rhetorically, 4) Close reading fosters good writing, and 5) criteria for evaluations belong in the classroom (pp. 5-6). I found that many of the things I already do that are best practices (quick writes, free writing, using rubrics to score model papers) would help students be prepared for writing on demand. Several new ideas for increasing writing fluency and managing time during a writing test were also discussed in depth and have proved invaluable as I teach both my middle school and college freshman. All in all, I felt validated in what I do as a teacher of writing and was exposed to new ideas to help me continue to prepare my students for a world where high-stakes testing isn't going anywhere anytime soon.



Saturday Seminars a Success

By Bea Sousa

Our first year of Saturday Seminars was a rounding success:

- 30-40 teachers attended each of the four sessions.
- Administrators came too!
- Parking and space needs led to relocation to a nearby school.
- The seminars were a venue for demos by eight TCs.
- Four participants in the seminars applied for and became Summer Institute 2007 fellows

Plans for the 2007-08 Saturday Seminars are in the works. We will arrange for a nearby school to host and offer six sessions this time. We are thinking of delving more deeply into writing on demand and adding sessions on writing to learn.

If you have ideas for Saturday Seminar topics or would like to participate as a presenter, email Bea Sousa at beals42@iquest.net. Those of you who would like to attend should watch for a flyer either on-line or in your mailbox in August. Please encourage teachers in your building to attend. Saturday Seminars are a great way to start a relationship with the Indiana Writing Project.



Bea prepares to read *Paperboy* by Dave Pilkey to the group.



Participants give a reader's theater performance.

Indiana Network Retreat a Fun Time for All

February 23-24, 2007, marked the third annual Indiana Network Retreat at the Hilton Indianapolis North. Leadership and TCs from all Network Sites attended. After a wonderful dinner, Mary Nicolini from the Indiana Teachers of Writing site began our Friday evening with a read aloud and an invitation to write. Later, Walt Wintin, from the Indiana University Southeast Writing Project, assumed the role MC of our sharing time. We laughed (mostly at Walt's poetry), we cried, and we enjoyed this time of fellowship.

On Saturday, the day began with breakfast and an overview of the Network data from Linda Hanson, Network Director and Site Director of IWP. Focus groups were offered with presentations on Youth Writing Camps, Cooking up an Open Institute, Multigenre Research, Craft Folders in the Classroom, Organizing Mini-lessons and Mentor Texts, Kamishibai Story Telling, and Picture Books. After lunch and more writing time, future goals were brainstormed as a whole group, then participants broke up into action groups based on interest to strategize and report back. Creating a Network website, Linking assessment and instruction—6+1 Traits and the NWP rubric, outreach opportunities, and writing letters/postcards to our politicians were among the choices offered.

Join us at our next retreat February 22-23, 2008, and stay up to date on Writing Project activities in Indiana.



Advanced Institute on Literacy Leadership

You actively teach Writing Workshop and colleagues are asking you questions:

- What are you doing? Why?
- Does this method really improve test scores?
- I want to try this. Will you help me?

Now you are wondering how to best help your colleagues, ultimately improving the learning of students?

You are moving into the role of a literacy leader.

Tammy Taylor and Jane Snider are facilitating an Advanced Institute this summer that will explore ways we as teachers can be effective literacy leaders in our schools as we teach our students as well as guide our colleagues. June 12-14, 2007. Flyer and registration form available at <http://iwp.iweb.bsu.edu>.

Submit a Proposal for the ITW 2007 Conference

Indiana Teachers of Writing is now accepting proposals for the ITW Conference, which will be held on October 12, 2007, in Indianapolis.

Proposals must be postmarked or emailed to Mary B. Nicolini by May 18, 2007. For more information and an application for the proposal, email Mary B. Nicolini at mbnicolini@phm.k12.in.us.

A Day with Janet Angelillo



Wow!

WHEN: June 27, 2007

WHERE: Ball State Alumni Center,
2800 W. Bethel Avenue, Muncie.

TOPIC: Writing about Reading: thinking and talking about texts that lead to insightful writing about texts

COST: \$75, paid by June 18, includes lunch. Limited to 100 participants. \$95 if paid after June 19. Confirmation and directions by email.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
contact Tammy Taylor
(writeone040@yahoo.com)

DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEXT IWP NEWSLETTER?

- Student writing?
- A reflective piece?
- Creative writing of your own?
- A book review (children's books, YA books, and professional books)?
- A successful teaching experience?
- News about an IWP fellow you know?

Please send all contributions to Jenny Smithson, IWP Newsletter Editor, at jsmithson@selma.bsu.edu. Contributions for the July issue must be sent via email by July 15, 2007.